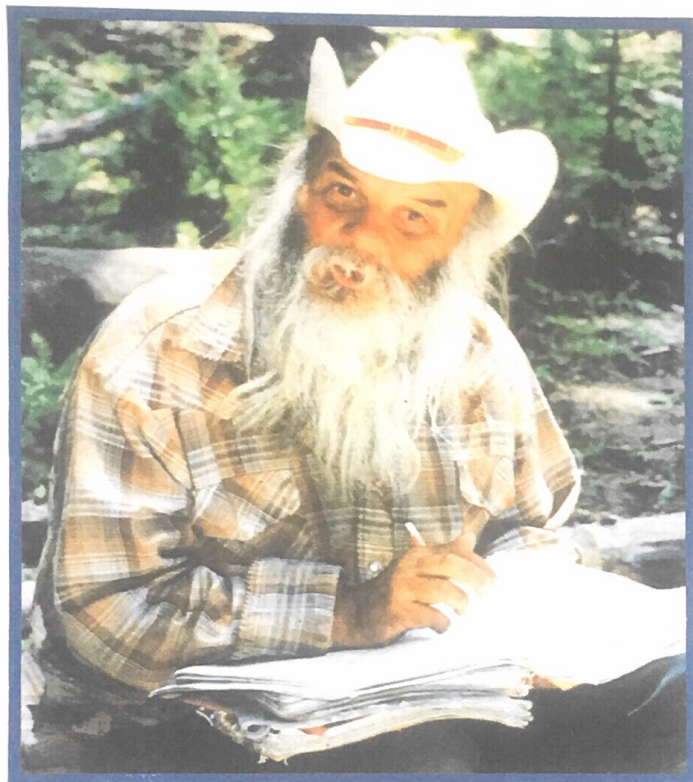


Rainbow Family Life Stories



*by Jodey Bateman.
Interviews with Rainbow
Family of Living Light
folks conducted between
1977 and 2008.*

*Scanned in 2018.
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11.B CLAY- "In and Out of the Robe"

5 pages

[11.B]

Clay - In and Out of the Robe

[I met Clay when he was still in the Christ Family at a Rainbow camp in Florida in 1976. The day after he left the Christ Family, I hitchhiked a ride with him in a pickup that had just been given to him.] Mohawk

I was born in Rome, New York in 1945 from French Canuck and Indian. I don't know the French language. Canuck means half French and Indian. You got some French Canadians that aren't Canucks. You go up to a French Canadian and call him a Canuck and he's liable to cut your throat. But I don't mind. I'm proud of my heritage.

My dad was a fork lift operator at the Rome, New York, airport. I don't know what he does now and I don't care. He left my mother with cancer and seven kids when I was five. My mom died February 22, 1951.

I was in an orphanage for 14 years after that. One was Jefferson County Children's home in Watertown, New York. I was there for eight years. Then my old man come and took me out and put me in the Methodist Orphanage in Waco, Texas, for six years more. It was come home - do your school studies - go to bed at nine - get up at six and do the whole thing over again. I had a lot of fun, though. I screwed a lot of girls in the orphanage - snuck up behind the girls' dorm and screwed them. I screwed one in the bushes next to the orphanage church. I got caught, but I didn't care.

I left the orphanage when I was 16. I been on the road for 15 years since then. ^(I worked in carnival) I was in the military in Germany during the Vietnam war. I spent three years and that's all I wanted of it. I spent 18 months in prison from 1969 to October 1971 in Auburn, New York. I was in the Auburn riot. It was at the same time as the Attica Prison riot. People took swords and hit the guards on the head. Mostly it was the colored guys. The white guys just stood around and watched. The colored guys took the flag and stomped it into the ground. To me that was a disgrace!

I been studying religion for umpteen dozen years. In order to study anything that you study, you got to get involved. Because they ain't gonna tell you everything that you want to know. So I preached for the Christ Family.

(11)

I joined the Christ Family on their Florida campaign in 1974. I met them just outside of Miami. I been studying how the Christ Family mind works and that's not to have any money. All money has to be turned in when you get into camp. Also you can't have a vehicle unless Lightning Amen says so. He's the honcho and everybody's under his spell.

~~To this day I haven't seen no star of David except on the buses that they got. They got a star with a lightning bolt through it on the buses.~~

Lightning Amen Jesus Christ grew up under the name of Cotton in Southern Georgia. I gather he left his native cotton field at 33 years old in 1968 and went to the Yuma desert. He fasted for 55 days and they found him there doubled up with his knees to his chin and they said he had the spirit of Christ with him. Then he went to San Diego, - Florida - all over the United States, he says. Peter is Lightning Amen's first disciple - an acid tripper. He reminds me of Dopey in Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

Lightning Amen claimed he had the Star of David in his hand and on his forehead. To this day I haven't seen no star of David except on the buses the Christ Family got. They got a star with a lightning bolt through it on the buses.

I used to sing country when I was a teenager with a band.

Sometimes when I was with the Christ Family I would start singing to myself and one of them would come up and tell me I couldn't do that. There was five of us Christ Family that came to the Rainbow Family camp in Florida one night in January 1976. We got up the next morning and fixed breakfast and then trucked on out. We got up the next morning and fixed breakfast for them and then trucked on out. I went on to California and got out of the robe cause I didn't like it.

I went to the Rainbow Gathering in 1978 in Oregon. I come up with a sister, a brother and a little child. I've always liked Jaxson. He's the first person that greeted me when I come into the Oregon Gathering. Jaxson was always smiling. He's more

down to earth than Lightning Amen.

~~I met up with~~ I met up with the Christ Family at the gathering and I went back in to find out what else they had to say. Well, I know everything they have to say and it ain't where it's at. To me they're just ripping the country off. They spend more time in jail than anything else - for things like sitting by the highway eating popsicles. The police don't care what they arrest them for. They spent a lot of time in jail in Florida and California last winter. I've seen the Christ Family go up to an animal shelter truck and let the dogs go. They've opened fences to let cattle out of pastures. Some brothers used to carry around wire cutters with them in their tow sacks for that. They'd go into churches and rob them blind. Three of the brothers are in jail in Florida for that.

Lightning Amen says the Rainbow Family ain't gonna last much longer. The Christ Family ain't coming to the Rainbow Gathering this year [1979]. Lightning Amen told them not to. They don't like to see the sisters naked or the brothers naked. But everybody chooses their own way of life. That's what Jaysun told me. Lightning Amen never did tell me nothing that I'd want to repeat. I'd a lot rather talk to Jaysun than him. The Christ Family said there was booze and guns at the gathering. I seen a little booze. I didn't see no guns at Oregon just a machete an Indian brother was running along with.

The Christ Family has a convoy on the East Coast and a convoy on the West Coast and they're on the road all the time. They just eat up gas. I don't know if they're gonna be together much longer the way the gas is going up. I would dare say there's just a couple hundred in the Christ Family. I've never seen more than 50 of them at one time. They're fighting more and more amongst themselves every day. They're getting heated to where a lot of brothers are ready to start a fist fight.

They think nobody's supposed to think except Lightning Amen. I got tired of it because I think for myself. The Christ

(13)

Family's brains are frying like they were in a frying pan. My brain is still intact. I'm not burnt out like the rest are. I didn't let them get me burnt out. There ain't that many coming into the robe and there are a lot getting out. They say no sex, but I know sisters and brothers that get screwed. They keep it a secret from the main body. Two of the sisters have gotten pregnant in the last year.

There's a seven month old and a three year old and a six year old on the road with the Christ Family. They call them hobbits. The mothers are on the road somewhere else and the hobbits are with a brother.

I took my robe off yesterday. I got tired of looking like a monkey. I sold blood this morning and ate bacon. I'm not as tense now as I was in the robe. I've been unwinding a lot the past couple of days. A sister in the Christ Family give me this pickup. Her and her husband sleep in the same bed but in different sleeping bags, but they're still married. Her husband give the truck to both of us and she just give it to me with a note that says I can use the truck. I'll use the truck for a shuttle vehicle at the Arizona Rainbow Gathering. The pickup has an \$800 lien on it and I'm gonna work this winter to pay it off.

I've studied all facets of religion - the Catholics, the whole works and to me there ain't no one religion better than the other. They're all a bunch of bogus bastards. I already know what the Bible says. Who knows, I may end up a Buddha man. I can't believe what the Bible says. I have to believe what the Great Spirit puts within me. I got my own way of thinking about God. God is real - yeah, but not the way the Christ Family is doing it. They think they can get everything free - but they got another think coming. The neighborhood churches will give them gas, but you can't get

that free gas all the time. I seen the Christ Family out of gas
beside the road in their bus a lot of times. (14)

Jesus didn't say he would be born again in a physical form like
Lightning Amen. He's coming back in the clouds. But his spirit is
walking here on earth now, though not in a physical form.

To me the past is past. I look forward to the future.

[Clay and I went on in his pickup to the Arizona
Rainbow Gathering where he used the pickup as a shuttle
vehicle and to bring in food.]